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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): INFINEON TECHNOLOGIES AG [DE/DE]; St.-Martin-Strasse 53, 81669 Munich (DE).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): MISHRA, Shridhar, Mubaraq [IN/US]; 1325A Spruce Street, Berkeley, CA-94709 (US). ZHANG, Tina [CN/SG]; Blk 550 Bedok North Street 3 #05-516, Singapore 460550 (SG). HU, Chunfeng [CN/SG]; Blk 105 Bedok Reservoir Rd #12-398, Singapore 470105 (SG). SIM, Hak, Keong [SG/SG]; Blk 313A Anchorvale Rd #12-126, Singapore 541313 (SG).

(74) Agent: WATKIN, Timothy, Lawrence, Harvey; Lloyd Wise, Tanjong Pagar, P.O. Box 636, Singapore 910816 (SG).

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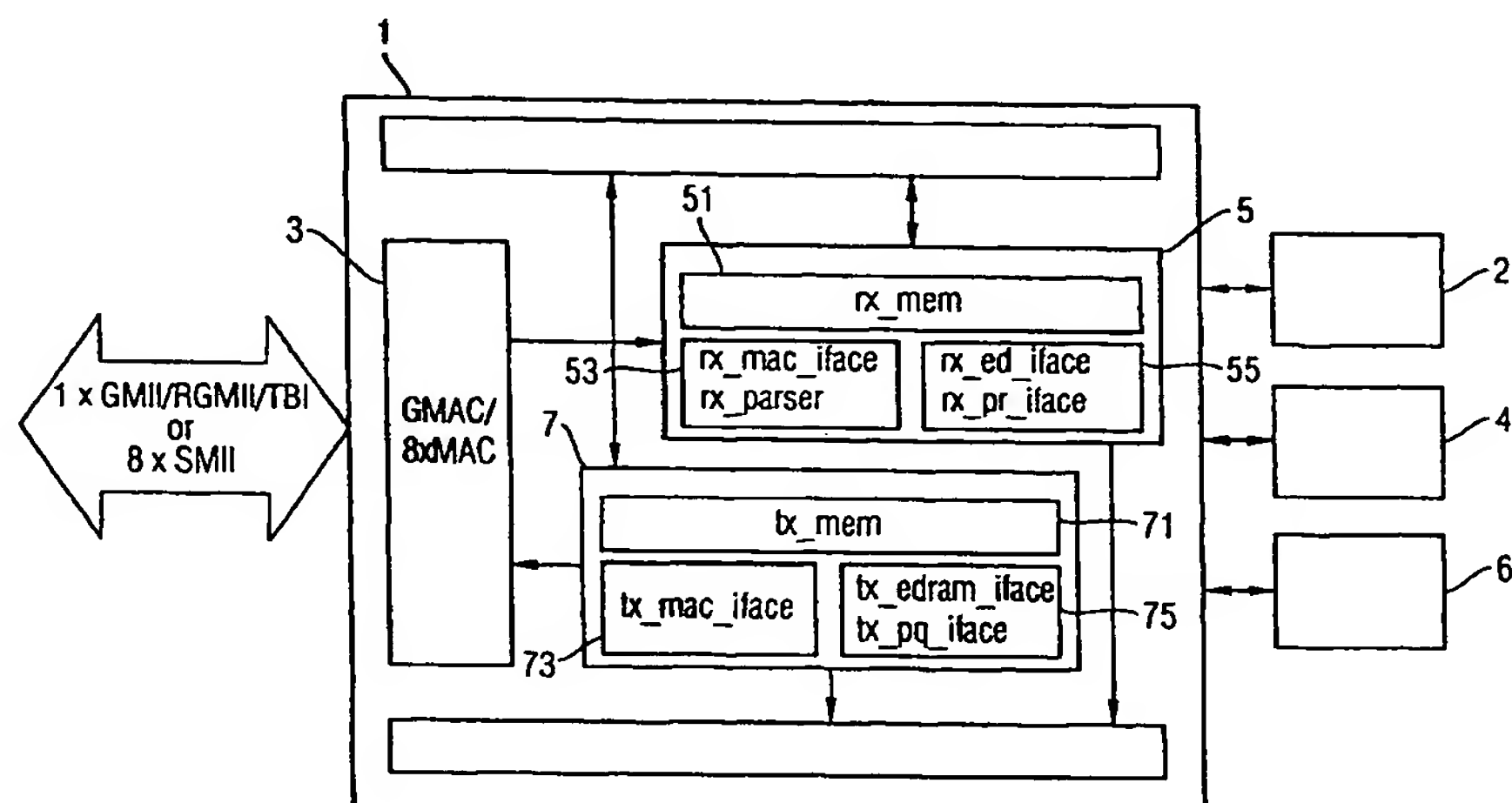
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(54) Title: CONFIGURABLE FAST ETHERNET AND GIGABIT ETHERNET DATA PORT



(57) Abstract: An Ethernet switch has at least one ingress/egress port 1 which is operable in two modes, in a first mode as a GE port and in a second mode as a plurality of FE ports. The port has 8 MAC interfaces 3 each of which is capable of receiving/transmitting FE packets, and at least one of the MAC interfaces can be configured to receive/transmit GE packets. Thus, the port has two modes of operation. The port further includes receive and transmit modules 5, 7 which receive GE and FE packets from, and transmit GE and FE packets to, the interfaces. If there are 8 such ports in the Ethernet switch, then by switching different numbers of the ports between the two modes, the switch may operate in 9 different modes: as 8 GE ports, 7 GE ports and 8 FE ports, 2 GE ports and 48 FE ports, 1 GE port and 56 FE ports, or simply as 64 FE ports.